

Hindustan and the "-stan" Countries

There are **195 sovereign nations** in the world. Among these, more than **110 countries** follow some form of democratic electoral system. Out of these, there are three countries with the highest populations that are governed by an electoral system. With a population of about **1.45 billion** (approximately 4 times that of America), **India** is the **world's largest democratic country**. Next to India is **China**, with a population of about **1.41 billion**, which is a nation governed by a communist regime.



Our **nation of Bharath! A great ancient nation!** The Indian constitution states "**India, that is Bharat**". In the ancient Persian language, "**India's name is Hindustan**". Similar to the name Hindustan, there are countries named Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Balochistan. The name Hindustan is a compound word formed by combining two nouns: "**Hindu + stan**".

In Sanskrit, "**Sthanam**" means 'place'. The word "stan" denotes a country. In the Persian language, "**stan**" means "**land**" or "**dwelling place**" (Place of / Land of). The 7 major countries ending with "stan" are:

1. **Afghanistan:** Land of the Afghans.
2. **Kazakhstan:** Land of the Kazakh people (The world's largest '-stan' country by area).
3. **Kyrgyzstan:** Land of the Kyrgyz people.
4. **Uzbekistan:** Land of the Uzbek people.
5. **Turkmenistan:** Land of the Turkmen people.
6. **Tajikistan:** Land of the Tajik people.
7. **Pakistan:** 'Pak' means 'pure' in Urdu; hence, the land of the pure.

8) The precise name of the country 'Azerbaijan' is **Azerbaijan**. This is also a country located in the Central Asia/Caspian Sea region.

Along with these, there are a few more "-stans". Although they are not independent countries, they exist as states or autonomous regions within other countries:

1. **Balochistan:** The land of the Baloch people, situated on the border of Pakistan and Iran.

2. **Kurdistan:** A historical region inhabited by the Kurdish people on the borders of Iraq, Iran, Turkey, and Syria.
3. **Arabia and other Persian naming conventions:** Historically, there is also a tradition of calling the Arab nation '**Arabistan**' and Hungary '**Angaristan**' in the Persian language.
4. Similar to the 12 "-stan" regions mentioned above, the country south of the Himalayas has been called "Hindustan".

Hindu-stan – The land of the "Hindu" people. The Mahabharata mentions that the Pandavas ruled the Bharata nation south of the Himalayas, and the Kauravas ruled countries like Gandhara to the west of the Himalayas.

Who were the "Hindu" people living in Hindustan? How did they get the name "Hindu"?
Who gave them this name?

- Ilango Adigal praises it as the "**Great land worshipped by the celestial beings**" (*Kaalkol Kaathai, Song line - 220*).
- *The landmass located to the north of the ocean and south of the Himalayas is called 'Bharata Varsha'.* This is a "**Deva Nirmitam Desam**" (A land created by the Gods). That is, the Vishnu Purana clearly declares that this landmass was not demarcated by ordinary humans; it is a "**sacred land fashioned by the Gods**".

Hindu-stan is the land of Hindus.

Yours sincerely,
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Primary Subject Tags:

- **Toponymy and Etymology:** The article heavily focuses on the origin of country names, specifically analyzing the Persian suffix "**stan**" (meaning "land" or "dwelling place") and its Sanskrit equivalent "**Sthanam**".
- **Global Geography:** It categorizes various geographical regions, highlighting the seven major independent "-stan" countries like **Kazakhstan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan**, as well as autonomous regions such as **Balochistan and Kurdistan**.
- **Demographics and Political Systems:** The text contrasts the governance and populations of the world's largest nations, specifically noting **India as the world's largest democracy** (1.45 billion people) and **China as a communist nation**.
- **Indian History and Cultural Heritage:** It explores the ancient geographical and cultural identity of India as "**Bharat**" and "**Hindustan**" (the land of the Hindu people) located south of the Himalayas.
- **Ancient Literature and Mythology:** The article draws upon classical texts to define India's historical boundaries, citing the **Mahabharata** (referencing the Pandavas and Kauravas), the **Vishnu Purana** (which calls Bharata Varsha a "Deva Nirmitam Desam" or land fashioned by Gods), and the poetic praises of **Ilango Adigal**.
- **Historical Linguistics:** It examines Persian naming conventions applied to other regions historically, such as calling Arabia "**Arabistan**" and Hungary "**Angaristan**".